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**U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION REPORT**

973432

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



304875

I. HEADING

DATE: October 16, 2001

SUBJECT: Pollution Report for the Cleveland Hopkins Airport Anthrax Response, Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, Ohio

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POLREP 1 - Initial and Final, CT Emergency Response

Start Date: October 15, 2001

II. BACKGROUND

Site No.:	
NPL Status:	Non-NPL
Response Authority:	CERCLA
State Notification:	None (FBI/CID Referral)
Latitude	41°24'44.057" N
Longitude:	81°50'08.783" W
Start Date:	October 15, 2001
Completion Date:	October 15, 2001

III. SITE INFORMATION

A. Incident Category: CT Emergency Response - Anthrax

B. Site Description

1. Site Location and Background

A suspicious white powder was discovered on a Continental Airlines (Continental) flight arriving at the Cleveland Hopkins International Airport (CHIA) on 15 Oct 01. A flight attendant noticed a white powder when unwrapping rolls of toilet paper in both of the rear restrooms. The rolls of toilet paper were disposed of in trash receptacles in the restrooms. The flight attendant reported that the powder spilled onto the sink, floor, and her clothing. A Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) agent was on the plane and notified the appropriate authorities. The plane and passengers were quarantined on the airport's tarmac until the powder could be screened for anthrax.

2. Description of Threat

On 15 Oct 01, an unknown white powder was spilled on a Continental (Flight 456) plane carrying 155 passengers.

Anthrax is an acute infectious disease caused by the spore-forming bacterium *Bacillus anthracis*. Anthrax most commonly occurs in hooved mammals and can also infect humans. Symptoms of disease vary depending on how the disease was contracted, but usually occur within 7 days after exposure. The serious forms of human anthrax are inhalation anthrax, cutaneous anthrax, and intestinal anthrax. Initial symptoms of inhalation anthrax infection may resemble a common cold. After several days, the symptoms may progress to severe breathing problems and shock. Inhalation anthrax is often fatal.

IV. RESPONSE INFORMATION

A. Situation

1. Current situation:

On 15 Oct 01, FBI requested U.S. EPA assistance in responding to the incident. U.S. EPA mobilized the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) from Tetra Tech EM Inc. to respond to the potential anthrax release at the CHIA.

2. Removal Actions to date:

On 15 Oct 01, at approximately 14:15 hours, FBI and U.S. EPA Criminal Investigative Division notified U.S. EPA's On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) of the incident. [REDACTED] Non-responsive [REDACTED] OSC Mark Durno mobilized to the scene at approximately 14:45 hours. At 15:15 hours, START mobilized to the scene to conduct screening and sampling activities. At 15:55 hours, START entered the plane donning encapsulated level B PPE. Upon entering the plane, START used a Ludlum Micro-R meter to conduct a radiation scan of the restrooms. No readings above background levels were noted. START then inspected the restrooms for the reported powder and questioned the flight attendant on the location of the spill. No visible powder was noted in either

restroom. START collected the trash bags from both restrooms which contained the toilet paper rolls. The bags were opened, a small amount of white powder was present in each bag. START conducted field screening for anthrax using a TetraCore BTA test strip. The sample result was negative indicating that the powder was likely not anthrax. Physical properties of the powder indicated the substance was most likely soap. The bags did not contain enough volume of powder to collect a sample. Therefore the bags were triple bagged and custody was relinquished to the FBI. The FBI transported the bags to an FBI laboratory in Maryland for further testing. At 16:30 hours, the plane was taxied to the gate and all passengers and staff were allowed to depart the plane.

B. Planned Removal Activities

- None.

C. Next Steps

- None.

D. Key Issues

- U.S. EPA is assisting local, State, and Federal agencies in responding to numerous incidents nationwide involving questionable materials such as light, unknown powders.

V. COST INFORMATION

Estimated costs:

START	\$ 750
U.S. EPA	\$ 250

VI. DISPOSITION OF WASTES

Disposal of waste will be coordinated by the Cleveland Fire Department